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Forty-First session

UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED FROM VOLUNTARY FUNDS REPORT FOR 1989-1990 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1991

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the High Commissioner's report on UNHCR activities financed by voluntary funds for 1989-1990 and proposed programmes and budget for 1991 as contained in the overview document (A/AC.96/753) and Parts I to V of document A/AC.96/751. The Advisory Committee also had before it various reports submitted to the Extraordinary session of the Executive Committee in May 1990, including the report of the Temporary Working Group of the Executive Committee (A/AC.96/742), the up-date of UNHCR programmes and budget and of the financial status (A/AC.96/743) and a Note on the impact of the financial crisis on UNHCR activities (A/AC.96/744).

2. During its consideration of the above-mentioned reports, the Committee met with the Deputy High Commissioner and his colleagues who provided additional information.

General observations

3. The Advisory Committee appreciates the steps which have been taken to decrease the size of the overview document and encourages further refinements to this end. The Advisory Committee exchanged views with the Deputy High Commissioner and his colleagues on this matter, particularly with regard to tabular presentations, and in this connection, noted the usefulness and

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simplicity of some of the tables contained in the High Commissioner's update of UNHCR programmes and budget (A/AC.96/743) submitted in May 1990 to the Extraordinary session of the Executive Committee.

4. That being said, the Advisory Committee recommends that, in future, the details of overall allocations be re-incorporated within the overview document. As stated in paragraph 20 of the overview document, A/AC.96/753, that information is currently included in Part V of document A/AC.96/751; however, in the opinion of the Advisory Committee, such information belongs more appropriately in the overview. Furthermore, the lack of sufficient cross references between the overview and Part V of A/AC.96/751 hampered the Committee's review.

5. The Advisory Committee also believes that a clear indication of the coverage and scope of the General Programmes and Special Programmes should be provided. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that in its report to the Extraordinary session of the Executive Committee, the Temporary Working Group "recommended that UNHCR and the Executive Committee examine whether the distinction between General and Special Programmes remains valid". (A/AC.96/742, para. 39 (n)) The Advisory Committee was informed that the Administration's observations on this matter would be presented to the forthcoming sesssion of the Executive Committee.

6. The Advisory Committee also requests that future reports include all information germane to its examination of the estimates. In this connection, the Committee notes that in paragraph 4 of A/AC.96/753 the High Commissioner states that "the actions taken or foreseen by UNHCR pursuant to the recommendations contained in the report of the Temporary Executive Committee working Group (A/AC.96/742) will be reported on separately in conference room papers and/or in oral reports by the Office to the Committee." The Advisory Committee was informed that time constraints related to the preparation of the current documentation precluded the inclusion of such information in the reports before it; however, the impact of the recommendations would be more obvious in future submissions. The Advisory Committee welcomes this statement and requests that particular care be taken to ensure that information on the implementation of priorites adopted by the Executive Committee, particularly those outlined in paragraph 39(c) of the report of the Temporary Working Group (A/AC.96/742) be included in the High Commissioner's next report.

UNHCR activities financed by Voluntary Funds for 1989-1990 and proposed programmes and budget for 1991

7. As noted by the High Commissioner in paragraph 16 of A/AC.96/753, the Office continued to suffer the "unprecedented financial crisis" during the period under review. "Moreover, notwithstanding the very focused deliberations and recommendations of the Temporary Executive Committee Working Group, ... the Office still faces the problem of the unpredictability of voluntary contributions and ... has not found mechanisms for guaranteed income". (Ibid., para. 17) In the circumstances, the Advisory Committee considers it essential that the Office continue to implement cost savings measures and intensify its efforts to ensure the most efficient operation of all activities.

8. In this connection, the Advisory Committee draws the attention of the Executive Committee to the recommendations of the Board of Auditors as contained in its report to the General Assembly A/45/5/Add.5. In the opinion of the Advisory Committee, the implementation of a number of these recommendations would result in further productivity and economies.

9. The Advisory Committee also recalls that the implementation of the Financial Management Information System (FMIS), which was designed and developed in 1987 and 1988, was to have resulted in improved efficiency and productivity. In its report to the twenty-ninth session (1988) of the Executive Committee, the Committee requested that future submissions contain detailed information on the benefits gained from the system and the impact on budgetary requirements. In its corresponding report to the fortieth session, the Advisory Committee noted the absence of such information. Subsequent to its consideration of a Conference Room Paper on the costs and benefits of using computer-based systems, the Executive Committee, at its fortieth session, also requested further information on how implementation of the system had improved productivity. The information in paragraphs 55-59 of A/AC.96/753 is provided in response to that request; however, it does not include details regarding the actual costs of implementation. The Advisory Committee would have appreciated such information, especially in view of the fact that, as indicated in paragraph 55, the continuing budgetary constraints and other factors "have impinged on the rate of the FMIS implementation over the past year, in particular at Headquarters". The Committee was assured that the system is being implemented within the budgeted allocations, and that the above-mentioned delays would not result in additional costs.

10. The Advisory Committee notes that

> "Training missions in the latter half of 1989 were severely limited by budgetary constraints. Since the beginning of 1990, training missions have resumed and, by the end of June, regional training courses had been undertaken covering 59 staff from 38 countries. Further courses are scheduled to have reached all regions by the end of 1990."

In the opinion of the Advisory Committee, such training is essential if the full benefits of the system are to be realized.

11. In paragraph 59 of the overview, the High Commissioner states that "more specific indications of benefits accruing as a result of the FMIS implementation can be reported in the future". The Advisory Committee trusts that such information will be included in the High Commissioner's subsequent overview reports and that the impact of the system on the estimates will be clearly indicated.

12. The impact of the financial crisis (see para. 7 above) was described in the High Commissioner's report A/AC.96/744 to the Extraordinary Session of the Executive Committee. As stated in paragraph 16 of the overview (A/AC.96/753), as a result of the crisis, priorities had to be set "with the result, for example, that opportunities for the best durable solution, voluntary repatriation, could not be seized or consolidated for lack of resources ..." In paragraph 33 of the same document, the High Commissioner elaborates on this point, stating his concern "that financial constraints made it difficult in some instances to effect movements back to countries of origin notwithstanding that favourable conditions therefore existed and that refugees themselves were willing and eager to return."

13. The Advisory Committee shares the above concern, and, in this connection it points out that while the initial costs related to voluntary repatriation may be high, the long-term costs associated with continued care and maintenance (as opposed to the costs of repatriation) are far higher. It is the view of the Advisory Committee, therefore, that priority should be given to repatriating refugees where favourable conditions exist.

14. In response to inquiries regarding the current status of contributions, the Advisory Committee was informed that, as far as Special Programmes are concerned, several programmes aimed at achieving durable solutions have remained with insufficient or even without any contributions and that despite several downward revisions of planned programme activities, UNHCR still expects a substantial funding shortfall for these programmes and will have to carry-over into 1991 some of the needs that have been assessed.

Overall Expenditure

15. Table A below summarizes by continent/area total UNHCR expenditure in 1989 from all sources of funds and provides the 1990 initial/"noted" and revised/approved estimates, as well as projections for 1991. Table B provides a breakdown of the same totals by source of funds (Regular Programme, General Programmes and Special Programmes) and allocations (operations and programme support and administration.) In table C the programme support and administration totals shown in table B are broken down by source of funds. To provide a complete picture of UNHCR expenditure, information regarding the Special Programmes budgets has been included. However, the Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 108 of A/AC.96/753 that "for many special programmes, UNHCR is not in a position at this juncture to make projections with any degree of accuracy for 1991," and that the corresponding "1991 estimates of the anticipated expenditure and staffing requirements are at this stage purely tentative and do not lend themselves to true comparison." (para. 111)

TABLE A

TOTAL UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN 1989. ESTIMATES FOR 1990 AND PROJECTIONS FOR 1991

(by continent/area)

ALLOCATIONS	1989		1990				1991	
	EXPENDITURE		INITIAL ESTIMATES		REVISED ESTIMATES		PROJECTIONS	
	US$ '000	%	US$ '000	%	US$ '000	%	US$ '000	%
Africa	257785.4	43.9%	175939.3	35.3%	241276.1	36.9%	178814.7	32.9%
Asia and Oceania	109936.8	18.7%	93272.7	18.7%	134279.2	20.5%	127808.4	23.5%
Europe and North America	27613.8	4.7%	26990.3	5.4%	37816.1	5.8%	20560.2	3.8%
Latin America and the Caribbean	40400.6	6.9%	36327.9	7.3%	60627.7	9.3%	26347.9	4.8%
South West Asia,North Africa and the Middle East	104555.8	17.8%	86934.9	17.5%	94151.9	14.4%	62159.6	11.4%
Overall allocations	46371.6	7.9%	78269.7	15.7%	85624.9	13.1%	127906.4	23.5%
TOTAL	586664.0	100.0%	497734.8	100.0%	653774.9	100.0%	543597.2	100.0%

TABLE B

TOTAL UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN 1989. ESTIMATES FOR 1990 AND PROJECTIONS FOR 1991

(by allocations and sources of funds)

ALLOCATIONS/ SOURCE OF FUNDS	1989 EXPENDITURE US$ '000	%	1990 INITIAL ESTIMATES US$ '000	%	1990 REVISED ESTIMATES US$ '000	%	1991 PROJECTIONS US$ '000	%
Allocation								
Operations	509127.8	86.8%	412051.8	82.8%	573203.8	87.7%	465459.9	85.6%
Programme Support & Administration	77536.2	13.2%	85683.0	17.2%	80571.1	12.3%	78137.3	14.4%
TOTAL	586664.0	100.0%	497734.8	100.0%	653774.9	100.0%	543597.2	100.0%
Source of funds								
Regular Budget	17068.3	2.9%	18332.0	3.7%	16667.8	2.5%	17296.3	3.2%
General Programmes	385852.4 a/	65.8%	414357.0	83.2%	340855.9	52.1%	330211.4	60.7%
Special Programmes	183743.3	31.3%	65045.8	13.1%	296251.2	45.3%	196089.5	36.1%
TOTAL	586664.0	100.0%	497734.8	100.0%	653774.9	100.0%	543597.2	100.0%

a/ Does not include $733,000 obligated under the Revolving Funds for Staff Housing

TABLE C

BREAKDOWN OF UNHCR PROGRAMME SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS BY SOURCE OF FUNDS

FOR 1989 EXPENDITURE, 1990 (INITIAL AND REVISED) AND 1991

SOURCE OF FUNDS	1989		1990				1991	
	EXPENDITURE		INITIAL ESTIMATES		REVISED ESTIMATES		PROJECTIONS	
	US$ '000	%	US$ '000	%	US$ '000	%	US$ '000	%
Regular Budget	17068.3	22.0%	18332.0	21.4%	16667.8	20.7%	17296.3	22.1%
General Programmes	52509.8	67.7%	61279.0	71.5%	58264.4	72.3%	55522.9	71.1%
Special Programmes	7958.1	10.3%	6072.0	7.1%	5638.9	7.0%	5318.1	6.8%
TOTAL	77536.2	100.0%	85683.0	100.0%	80571.1	100.0%	78137.3	100.0%

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General Programmes

16. As recalled in papragraph 80 of the overview, the initial approved budgetary ceiling of $428.8 million for 1989 General Programmes was subsequently revised downwards to $389.4 million. The Advisory Committee notes that total expenditure for General Programmes in the end-of-year accounts amounted to $386.6 million, (including $733,000 obligated under the Revolving Fund for Staff Housing). However, "of this amount, $38.0 million in unliquidated obligations has to be financed from 1990 income." (Para. 81) With regard to 1990 General Programmes, the fortieth session of the Executive Committee "noted" an initial budgetary target of $414.4 million for General Programmes; subsequently, at its extraordinary session in May 1990 it approved a revised target of $340.9 million. (Table B above.)

17. As discussed in paragraph 83 of the overview, obligations incurred under General Programmes during the first half of 1990 totalled $169.8 million including $6.4 million from the Emergency Fund, while obligations for the third quarter are estimated at $85.0 million; i.e. a total of $254.8 million for the first three quarters. The Committee was informed that income in 1990 for General Programmes had reached some $298 million, enough to cover the deficit carry-over from 1989 ($38 million) and to meet 1990 expenditure until early October. Though concerned about delayed pledging of contributions, UNHCR was nevertheless hopeful that donor support would be sufficient to meet 1990 requirements for which a target of $340.9 million (excluding the 1989 carry-over) had been approved by the Executive Committee at its extraordinary session in May 1990. (See para. 16 above.)

18. The High Commissioner proposes a 1991 General Programmes budget of $330,211,400 which it is projected "will enable the provision of assistance to refugees at a minimum acceptable level" (para. 17) but does not take into account "the possibility of deterioration in the refugee situation or the development of new ones ..." (para. 17).

19. A breakdown of the initial 1991 budget estimates for General Programmes by region, as compared with the 1989 expenditure and 1990 initial and revised estimates is provided in paragraph 99 of the overview document; details, at the level of country programmes are included in document A/AC.96/751 (Parts I to V). As shown in the table in paragraph 99, the 1991 total of $330,211,400 for General Programmes includes $151,126,500 for Africa, partially offset by an amount of $15 million. As noted in footnote b to the table, this represents inland transportation, storage and handling (ITSH) to be met by the World Food Programme. The corresponding 1990 estimate for Africa ($151,804,700) shows a partial offset of $11 million for the same reason.

20. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that in its report to the General Assembly on the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 1989 (A/45/5/Add.5), the Board of Auditors noted that

> "Under a memorandum of understanding, when WFP provides food aid through UNHCR to refugees located in the least developed countries, and within the availability of donor funding, UNHCR may claim internal transportation, storage and handling costs incurred. Owing to the absence of clearly defined recording and reporting procedures, the refunds of 50 per cent or more internal transportation storage and handling costs were characterized by inordinate delays." (para. 12)

The Committee also recalls that in its report to the Extraordinary Session of the Executive Committee (A/AC.96/742) the Temporary Working Group of the Executive Committee inter alia

> "Expressed the wish that the High Commissioner should perservere in his negotiations with the WFP, to ensure that UNHCR be reimbursed up to 50 per cent of internal transport, storage and handling costs already incurred in the provision of food to refugees situated in Least Developed Countries."

The Group also requested Member States of the Executive Committee

> "to ensure that WFP makes early reimbursement to UNHCR from funds already provided to WFP for internal transportation and handling (ITSH) by donors"

and requested UNHCR to ensure that ITSH costs are clearly indicated by country programme in the documents presented to the Executive Committee. (Para. 39 o-t.)

21. In response to inquiry, representatives of UNHCR agreed that past procedures for the handling of ITSH, as outlined in the Board of Auditors report had not been effective. However, pursuant to recommendations by the Board of Auditors, new procedures had been instituted, including the establishment of a coordinating mechanism at Headquarters.

22. The question of support costs is discussed in paragraphs 84-98 of the overview document. The table following paragraph 85 of the overview compares 1989 actual expenditure for support costs (PSA and PPE) with 1990 estimates and 1991 projections; it also provides a breakdown by source of funds (Regular Budget, General Programmes or Special Programmes) and location (Headquarters or Field). As can be seen from the table following paragarph 85 of the overview, support costs under the General Programmes budget are as follows:

	$
1989 actual expenditure	91.1 million
1990 initial estimate	98.0 million (rounded)
1990 revised estimate	93.3 million
1991 initial projection	85.4 million

23. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 86 that the figure of $91.1 million for 1989 reflects a very favourable rate of exchange and the austerity measures introduced in the second half of the year. The increase in the initial 1990 estimate "was due to additional provisions in the field under staff costs and non-staff costs, mainly due to the increase in the number of posts, excluding those transferred from the Regular Budget." (Para. 87)

24. Revised estimates for support costs under General Programmes in 1990 total $93.3 million, a net reduction of $4.7 million which reflects volume reductions in staff and non-staff costs totalling $11.3 million offset by increases totalling $6.6 million due to exchange and inflation factors as well as new General Service salary scales. The Advisory Committee notes from the table following paragraph 89 of the overview that the revised 1990 estimate of $93.3 million does not include an estimated $1.5 million to meet staff costs increases approved by the General Assembly effective 1 July 1990.

25. In this connection, the Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 92 of the overview that while the effect of the measures approved by the General

Assembly has been estimated at $1.5 million for 1990 (and $3 million for 1991), the costs "have yet to be attributed either to Headquarters of Field support costs by location and individual staff members"; however, provision for the cost increases has been included in the Programme Reserve.

26. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 91 that the revised estimates for 1990 include a 2.5 per cent inflation factor for Headquarters and an average of five percent for the Field, "in view of the rising trend of pricing levels observed both at Headquarters and in the Field. The initial 1990 estimates did not contain such provision, nor do the 1991 estimates which are costed at rates used for the revised 1990 estimates.

27. With regard to exchange rate variations, the Advisory Committee notes that those used for the field for both the 1990 revised and initial 1991 estimates were those in force in each country in March 1990; for Headquarters the rate used was Sfr. 1.49 / one US dollar, a change from the rate of Sfr. 1.65 / one US dollar used in calculating the initial 1990 estimates.

28. In addition to providing for exchange rate variations and inflation, the Advisory Committee notes that the $6.6 million increase shown in the table following paragraph 89 provides for General Service and local level salary scale increases; in this case a 3.63 per cent increase in the salary of General Staff at Headquarters as well as some increases in local salary scales, as discussed in paragraph 93 of the overview.

29. The net volume reductions shown in the table for both staff and non-staff costs are discussed in paragraphs 94-98 of the overview document. In this connection, the Advisory Committee notes that the reduction of $5.0 million (rounded) in respect of Headquarters staff relates in part to "the cost of 45 posts hitherto funded under General Programmes but which can be considered as supporting on-going Special Programmes." (Para. 96) The transfer of those posts "accounts for a reduction of some $3.4 million in staff costs"; the balance of $1.6 million relates to the impact in 1990 of anticipated post reductions. (See paragraph 34 below.)

30. While not affecting the overall total for 1990, the Advisory Committee notes from the table following paragraph 89 that an increase of $10.6 million is shown for Headquarters with a corresponding reduction in the Field under 'Redistribution of project personnel posts'; the related explanation is provided in paragraph 90 of the overview. At its request, the Advisory Committee was provided with a functional breakdown of the 90 posts involved. The Committee was also informed that the costs associated with these posts are included in the 'overall allocations' (see para. 4 above), as are all PSA costs at Headquarters, irrespective of the source of financing.

31. Details concerning the Programme Reserve are provided in paragraphs 101-103 of the overview. As noted therein, the revised 1990 General Programmes budget includes a provision of $3.0 million for the Reserve, of which $1.5 million is to cover staff cost increases approved by the General Assembly effective 1 July 1990 (see para. 25 above). The balance is to cover unforeseen increases for operational projects.

32. The High Commissioner proposes that a Programme Reserve totalling $12,313,500 be incorporated into the 1991 budget for General Programmes, as stated in paragraph 103, this "represents 3 per cent of programmed activities, rather than reinstating the 10 per cent which had been customary prior to 1988". In addition to covering project-related costs as outlined in paragraph 103, an amount of $3.0 million is reserved for the staff costs increases approved by the General Assembly. (see para. 25 above)

Staffing resources

33. The question of staffing levels and related issues is discussed in part V of the overview, i.e. paragraphs 112-132; supporting data is contained in tables IV-B (PSA) and V-B (PPE) of the overview.

34. As noted in in paragraph 113, a major review of staffing requirements was undertaken in May/June 1990, and a total of 491 posts were scheduled for discontinuation in 1990. The overall staffing situation for both PSA and PPE posts, from all sources of funds, and the changes since 1 June 1990 can be summarized as follows:

UNHCR - Analysis of overall staffing situation (PSA/PPE)

Posts		HQ's	Field	Total	GLM */	Total
i)	Situation as at 1.1.86	481	1,300	1,781	293	2,074
(ii)	Situation as at 1.1.90	589	1,495	2,084	293	2,377
(iii)	1.4.90 (actual) (as in Doc.A/AC.96/743 Annex 6)	569	1,476	2,045	293	2,338
(iv)	Situation as at 1.1.91 as projected in Doc.A/AC.96/753 - tables IV-B, V-B	482	1,187	1,669	217	1,886
	New posts required for CIAV **/, Liberia, Malawi, and Sudan, as at 1.9.90	5	88	93	3	96
(v)	Likely post situation as at 1.1.91 as projected on 9 Sept. 1990	487	1,275	1,762	220	1,982 ***/

*/ GLM = Posts for Guards and Cleaners.

**/ International Support and Verification Commission (see Part IV of A/AC.751 Latin America and the Caribbean).

***/ May increase by some 60 posts for the Afghan Repatriation Programme for which at this stage none are included in the 1991 projections as the level of programme programme activity is yet to be determined.

35. As shown above, both the totals projected in the overview document (1,885) as well as the revised totals presented to the Advisory Committee (1,982) are below the overall staffing level of 1 January 1986, i.e. 2,074 posts, an objective set by the Executive Committee at its fortieth session. At the same time, the Advisory Committee notes and concurs in the High Commissioner's statement that he must retain "a degree of flexibility to adjust staffing levels in order to respond effectively to evolving or new refugee situations." (Para. 114)

36. As indicated in paragraph 34 above, a total of 491 posts were identified for discontinuation in 1990. In this connection, the Advisory Committee notes the statement in paragraph 125 of the overview that "at this juncture it is already apparent that it will not be possible, within the extremely tight timeframe within which post reductions are scheduled, to avoid terminating [the services of] a certain number of staff members"; this will result in the payment of one-time termination indemnities. In response to inquiries concerning this, the Committee was informed that details as to the impact of the post reductions on the actual number of staff currently employed were still being worked out within the framework of a redeployment and retrenchment exercise now underway which, in order to reduce the impact of the retrenchment, inter alia provides for a freeze on external recruitment, special leave without pay and early retirement. Until a full assessment of the cost involved is available by the end of September, UNHCR estimates that the financial implications of the retrenchment exercise could be in the range of two to four million dollars.

37. The Advisory Committee notes that the High Commissioner also intends to analyze "the current distribution of posts between Programme support and administration (PSA) and Project Personnel Expenditure (PPE) based on the functions carried out by each post as well as the programme to which they are affected." (Paragraph 115 of the overview). The Advisory Committee welcomes this review and the related preliminary categorization of posts as "established " and "temporary" (paragraph 116).

38. A number of related personnel matters are discussed in paragraphs 117-132 of the overview, including the use of "consultants" for special programmes (para. 117). The Advisory Committee points out that such personnel would be more appropriately defined as temporary staff and recommends that future submissions reflect this terminology.

39. The Board of Auditors has recommended a review of the policy governing the rotation of staff. In the view of the Board, "the periods of the reassignment are not long enough to permit adequate development of the required experience in programme delivery, and to justify the huge financial commitment in the rotation policy ..." (A/45/5/Add.5, para.47) As indicated in paragraph 119 of the overview, UNHCR agrees that "a certain number of components of the rotation policy need to be reviewed to enhance the efficiency of the organization, including, inter alia the length of assignment at the various categories of duty stations." The Advisory Committee requests that it be kept appraised of the outcome of this review.

40. The Advisory Committee would also appreciate receiving information with regard to the implementation of the Temporary Working Group's recommendation related to the ratio of Field/Headquarters positions. In this connection, the Committee recalls that the Group inter alia

"Underlined that greater effort should be made to discontinue headquarters positions. The existing 25/75 per cent ratio of headquarters to field positions should be further shifted in favour of the field. This would put more UNHCR personnel in the field to carry out operational activities, and reduce overall personnel costs due to the high cost of maintaining personnel in Geneva."

(A/AC.96/742, para. 41 (1))

Conclusion

41. Subject to the observations and recommendations made above, the Advisory Committee has no objection to the proposals requiring the formal approval of the Executive Committee, as summarized in paragraph 104 of the overview document.

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF
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INFORMATION NOTE ON UNHCR'S EVALUATION OF ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

(Submitted by the High Commissioner)

1 In the portion of document A/AC.96/753 (the Overview Document) dealing with evaluation activities, a summary is provided of the main steps which were taken during the period under review to strengthen UNHCR evaluation activities, the objectives and methodologies thereof, and the evaluations carried out between 1989 and the middle of 1990. The present Note provides a more detailed summary of those evaluations and concludes with a projection of activities to be carried out during the remainder of 1990. This information is provided in accordance with a recommendation contained in the Report of the Temporary EXCOM Working Group (document A/AC.96/742) which called on the Office to provide the Executive Committee with summaries of its evaluation reports.

Project Review Guidelines

2 With inputs from UNHCR's experts in the relevant sectors, Project Review Guidelines were drawn up by the Evaluation Unit during the second half of 1989 to establish a common approach to identifying project priorities that would assist programme staff at Headquarters and in the Field in making budget revisions and determining priorities in the process of project planning. In the Guidelines, priority activities in each sector of assistance were identified in order to ensure that high priority needs are addressed and that, at least, a minimum standard of living is guaranteed in all programme activities.

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Eastern Ethiopia

3 The evaluation of the programme in this area stressed the importance of longer-term solutions to problems associated with the provision of care and maintenance in Eastern Ethiopia, especially in the logistics and water supply sectors. In particular, recommendations were aimed at improving cost-effectiveness in transport and logistics arrangements and encouraging exploration of alternative water sources to replace the present water tankering operation and ensure the availability of water throughout the year.

4 Steps have since been taken which are expected to lead to reduced transport costs. The exploration of alternative sources of water was also commenced, although no satisfactory underground water source has been identified and water supply problems still persist. Agreement has also been reached on the suggestion for UNHCR and the World Food Programme (WFP) to have an independent consultancy undertake a study prior to the establishment of an integrated food transport and logistics system.

Honduras

5 An evaluation carried out in mid-1989 noted that changes in neighbouring countries offered the opportunity to effect major changes in UNHCR activities in Honduras. Among the recommendations resulting from the evaluation was a rationalization and reshaping of assistance, particularly that which would be provided to the refugees remaining in western Honduras after the now on-going repatriation. Although it was difficult at the time of the evaluation to predict events precisely and plan accordingly, staff in each region possessed a good understanding of what needed to be done, and had, indeed, to the extent possible, developed contingency plans. As a result of the events which occurred following the evaluation, it was possible to implement many of the recommendations. For instance, levels of assistance were reduced in all three regions in a continuing effort to make programmes more cost-effective and, in western Honduras, more attention was being given to the provision of material assistance.

Hong Kong

6 The evaluation expressed concern about the resources put into the operation in view of the difficulties experienced by UNHCR in influencing government activities in closed centres. The evaluation was also concerned with the high levels of assistance to relatively affluent refugees, the majority of whom have been able to obtain well-paying jobs in Hong Kong. The Office of the Chargé de Mission in Hong Kong has now taken steps to rationalize the services provided to both asylum-seekers and refugees. In addition, broad plans for scaling down the operation, subject to developments in the region, are also being considered, in consultation of course with the Office of the Chargé de Mission in Hong Kong.

Kenya

7 With the granting of full refugee status becoming increasingly more restrictive, an evaluation of the programme in Kenya recommended that UNHCR and the Kenyan Government should increase efforts to identify alternative solutions to the growing number of protection problems and, in particular,

that solutions should be found for mandate cases to avoid long-term dependence on allowances. In addition, the report stressed the need to strengthen current efforts to promote repatriation for Ugandan refugees. Finally, the evaluation emphasised the need to improve implementation of education and self-help activities administered by NGOs and suggested establishing training programmes with in-built employment options.

Sri Lanka

8 With no new influxes having occurred from Southern India during the twelve months previous to the evaluation, recommendations were made for the phase-out and hand-over of a number of programme components. The evaluation recommended that all housing units presently under construction should be completed before the end of 1990 and also suggested that reconstruction and rehabilitation activities be handed over. Pending a political settlement in the North East, the evaluation also suggested that a repatriation preparedness plan be developed for a limited number of the expected returnees from Europe and Southern India. Finally, the evaluation concluded that assistance to future returnees should focus on meeting immediate relief needs rather than long-term development activities.

9 Agreement has been reached on phasing out a number of programme components by the end of 1990. UNHCR will also hand over the final implementation of on-going shelter construction to the local housing authority. It is now anticipated that by the end of 1990, UNHCR will have concluded the hand-over of activities related to assistance to returnees who arrived in Sri Lanka prior to April 1989. Should the security situation improve substantially, it is anticipated that the UNHCR presence in Sri Lanka would continue beyond 1990 in order to provide protection and assistance for future returnees.

Western Sudan

10 The evaluation concluded that greater efforts were required to promote durable solutions for 20,000 Chadian refugees remaining in Western Sudan. While voluntary repatriation remains the envisaged durable solution, due to intermittent hostilities in Eastern Chad and ethnic affinities between cross-border tribes, many refugees might not elect to repatriate immediately. It was recommended that steps should be taken to provide some degree of self-reliance pending repatriation and to ensure local settlement of such refugees. Meanwhile, a number of ways to reduce care and maintenance costs were proposed. Some initial plans are already being made in Sudan and Chad to provide assistance to refugees who want to return. Steps have also been taken to reduce transport costs in Western Sudan.

Zambia

11 In view of the likelihood of a political settlement in Angola that could allow Angolan refugees in Zambia to return home, an evaluation stressed the need for a repatriation plan and meetings on the subject between the two governments and UNHCR. The planned relocation of refugees from the border areas to Meheba Settlement was also accordingly reviewed. At the same time, the evaluation made provision for such relocation, should it prove necessary, and drew up a detailed plan of action for a well-timed, co-ordinated relocation along with a plan for handing over the Meheba Settlement to the

government. A variety of steps have since been taken to improve the operation in Zambia, including a strengthening of the settlement administration, and improvements in food procurement and distribution.

12 Evaluation recommendations related to the Ukwimi Settlement dealt with priority-setting, streamlining settlement activities, and the development of repatriation plans for Mozambicans. A number of recommendations are being implemented and, as suggested, local authorities have been involved in planning the hand-over of the settlement by the end of 1991.

Non-food relief items

13 In view of the importance of non-food relief items in assistance programmes for refugees, and the fact that UNHCR spends on average one tenth of its budget every year on their procurement and distribution, a survey was undertaken of non-food relief items with a view to improve their provision. The survey considered such issues as who gets what, when, and how often. The review stressed the importance of, and suggested ways to effect, planning and monitoring. The survey also included recommendations on instructions for drawing up project descriptions, co-ordination, ensuring that vulnerable groups were identified from the outset, standardisation of procurement requests, record-keeping, and ways of assessing the suitability of non-food relief items.

Future activities

14 Future evaluation efforts will cover a number of country programmes on which evaluations could potentially have a major impact. Emphasis will also be placed on reviewing UNHCR's emergency response in selected countries. In-depth evaluations of country programmes are planned during the next six months for Afghanistan, Angola, Egypt, Western Ethiopia, India, Pakistan, Uganda, Zaire and a number of West African countries including Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

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Forty-first session

Report of the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection

1. The Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection met on 27 September 1990 under the chairmanship of His Excellency Ambassador Fredo Dannenbring of the Federal Republic of Germany. The following agenda was adopted:

(1) Refugee Women and International Protection (EC/SCP/59);
(2) Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/750);
(3) Any other business;
(4) Adoption of the report to the Executive Committee.

Refugee Women and International Protection

2. Item 1 on the agenda, Refugee Women and International Protection, was introduced by the Director of International Protection. In his opening remarks, the Director drew the attention of the Sub-Committee to the two documents on refugee women presented to this year's session of the Executive Committee, one of which reflected UNHCR's policy on Refugee Women (document A/AC.96/754). The Director explained that this policy was intended to form the basis for an organizational workplan to integrate refugee women's issues into all the activities of the Office. The paper would be considered in the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters. The second document (E/SCP/59), was to be considered in the Sub-Committee of the Whole on International Protection and contained a report on the experience gained by UNHCR and its operational partners in providing protection to refugee women.

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3. The Director underlined that international protection goes beyond legal and diplomatic protection. Protection concerns can often only be addressed through a variety of measures, many of which are assistance-related. Conversely, the planning and implementation of assistance programmes can have direct, and sometimes adverse, consequences for the protection of refugees. The Director explained that the document on refugee women and international protection therefore reflects the notion that the international protection of refugee women must be understood in its widest sense. In continuation, he reiterated some of the suggested approaches described in the document for dealing with the needs of refugee women in relation to refugee status determination, physical safety, food, water and relief supplies, health, education, skills training and economic activities as well as durable solutions.

4. The initiative of UNHCR in including this item on the Sub-Committee's agenda and the background note submitted by the High Commissioner were both unanimously commended. Many delegations drew attention to the quality of the note which they felt contained an exhaustive analysis of the special needs of refugee women and provided sensible and straight forward proposals for addressing them. They felt that the note could form a good basis for the revised and expanded guidelines on the protection of refugee women which UNHCR would be preparing. Several delegations also expressed the hope that, in light of the discussion in the Sub-Committee, the Executive Committee would see it fit to adopt substantive conclusions on the matter.

5. A large number of delegations equally commended the High Commissioner for his policy on refugee women. They endorsed the approach taken in this policy of integrating refugee women-specific issues into all the activities of the office, rather than creating special programmes. One delegate noted that this constituted one of the most significant developments in recent years, which should greatly increase the efficiency of UNHCR's activities. Another delegation stated that while agreeing with this approach, he also felt that there was a need in many situations to target refugee women in assistance programmes since their disadvantaged position had become institutionalized.

6. Two delegations expressed specific support for the position and activities of the UNHCR Senior Co-ordinator on Refugee Women. One delegation noted that his country was substantiating this support by contributing half a million dollars annually for this purpose. Another delegation hoped that the important functions of the Co-ordinator could eventually be integrated into UNHCR's structure.

7. Many delegations voiced agreement with the paramount need to ensure the full participation of refugee women in the identification of needs and resources, planning of activities and their implementation. They noted that only in this way the special needs of refugee women could be addressed successfully. In this context, several delegations emphasized the need to increase significantly the representation of female staff in all organizations involved in refugee programmes. This was needed at all levels in these organizations, including at the highest level, and both in the field and at their respective headquarters. One delegation stated that the note provided several examples of why such an increase in female staff was required in order to extend effective protection to refugee women.

8. One delegation recalled the efforts of the international community to address the situation of women in the context of the women's decade and noted that refugee women, like other women, generally faced discrimination which needed to be redressed. Another delegation reminded the Sub-Committee of the attention devoted to the issue of refugee women by the Executive Committee over the last five years. Several delegations pointed to the fact that refugee women constituted the majority of the total world refugee population and the need, therefore, for refugee programmes to be geared primarily to needs of refugee women. One delegation noted that in order for the protection of refugee women to become truly effective, national authorities needed also to improve the situation of women generally. Other delegations stressed the vital and multiple roles which women play in refugee communities and underlined that refugee women are a dynamic productive force and are not to be considered as being just a burden. One delegation stated that improving the dignity of refugee women also entailed improving the dignity of their families.

9. Some delegations voiced concern over the abuse of refugee women and expressed the hope that they would receive all required attention. One delegation noted that the major part of the problem lay in the lack of respect for the main human rights instruments, including the two international covenants on civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. The delegation also stated that universal observance of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women constituted a corner stone for the protection of refugee women.

10. Several delegations underlined the need for special measures to ensure that refugee women and girls have full and equal access to such services such as food, water and relief supplies, health, education, skills training and economic activities. One delegation drew attention to the special needs of pregnant and lactating women and added that respect for life before birth and for pregnant women deserved protection and support. Some delegations drew attention to other areas in which refugee women have special needs while another stated that refugee programmes also had to adress the harmful effects of traditional practices. One delegation stressed that assistance programmes should contain measures which facilitate the attainment of durable solutions for refugee women. Some delegations noted that refugee programmes needed to be sensitive to cultural traditions. Other delegations recalled the need for refugee women to be fully informed of their rights and entitlements.

11. Two delegations noted that specific and affirmative actions may often be needed in order to ensure equal treatment, and one of them therefore sought clarification of paragraph 10 of the background note in which it was stated that "the basic framework for extending international protection to refugee women includes the principle of equity between women and men as one of its fundamental components." The same delegation also requested clarification of the meaning of "escape routes" referred to in paragraph 23 of the note.

12. One delegation expressed specific agreement with a conclusion contained in the note according to which extending international protection to refugee women is a collective endeavour. Another delegation pointed to the special role which asylum countries need to play, whereas yet another one underlined the need for international solidarity and burden-sharing in order to ensure protection of refugee women. That delegation stated that other United Nations agencies, governments and non-governmental organizations should co-operate in an effort to increase assistance to refugee women. One delegation noted that

in order to provide real security to refugee women, it was now more than ever necessary to search for durable solutions.

13. One delegation expressed the hope that UNHCR would be able to continue on the charted course and increase its activities relating to the special needs of refugee women. It suggested that apart from reflecting these activities in its report, UNHCR may also wish to highlight them in its appeals for funding.

14. In relation to gender as a possible ground for granting refugee status, one delegation suggested that this issue be approached with caution. Another delegation pointed to the need for the determination of refugee status to follow uniform criteria in accordance with national procedures based on due process and, in this regard, endorsed the Executive Committee's conclusion on refugee women adopted at its thirty-sixth session. One delegation noted that there was a need for women interviewers, interpreters and decision-makers in refugee status determination procedures. Yet another delegation stated that one should not discriminate between internally and externally displaced women. He noted that although the former do not qualify as refugees under international instruments, their needs were just as great as those of refugee women and UNHCR had extended its assistance to them in the past. He therefore suggested that UNHCR increase its attention to internally displaced women and that UNHCR's guidelines should reflect their problem as well.

15. In responding to the debate, the Director of International Protection thanked the delegations for their substantive and constructive statements which, he stated, would be fully taken into account when UNHCR proceeded to revise and expand its guidelines on the protection of refugee women. He noted that although internally displaced women did not fall under the High Commissioner's mandate, the guidelines may nevertheless be of use in suggesting improvements in their protection. As regards the question raised with respect to the principle of equity, the Director confirmed that specific and affirmative action may indeed be required in order to ensure full and equal access to services provided in refugee programmes. Finally, he clarified that "escape routes" referred to border areas through which refugee women had to travel in order to reach reception centres and other camps and settlements where they could be protected and assisted.

16. At the conclusion of the discussion on this item, the Sub-Committee recommended that the Executive Committee adopt the following conclusion on Refugee Women and International Protection,

The Executive Committee

Noting with serious concern the widespread violations of the rights of refugee women and their specific needs;

Underlining the potential of refugee women and the need to ensure their full participation in analysing their needs and in designing and implementing programmes which make appropriate use of their resources;

Reaffirming its Conclusion No.39 (XXXVI) on Refugee Women and International Protection;

Stressing that all action taken on behalf of women who are refugees must be guided by the relevant international instruments relating to the status of refugees as well as other applicable human rights instruments, in particular, for States parties thereto, the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women;

Recognizing that ensuring equal treatment of refugee women and men may require specific action in favour of the former;

Recalling the special relevance of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies on the Advancement of Women and the obligation of the United Nations System as a whole to give effect to its provisions;

Reiterating the importance of collecting data which allows for the monitoring of progress achieved in meeting the needs of refugee women;

(a) Urges States, relevant United Nations organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, to ensure that the needs and resources of refugee women are fully understood and integrated, to the extent possible, into their activities and programmes and, to this end, to pursue, among others, the following aims in promoting measures for improving the international protection of refugee women:

1. Promote energetically the full and active participation of refugee women in the planning, implementation and evaluation/monitoring of all sectors of refugee programmes;

2. Increase the representation of appropriately trained female staff across all levels of all organizations and entities which work in refugee programmes and ensure direct access of refugee women to such staff;

3. Provide, wherever necessary, skilled female interviewers in procedures for the determination of refugee status and ensure appropriate access by women asylum-seekers to such procedures, even when accompanied by male family members;

4. Ensure that all refugees and the staff of relevant organizations and authorities are fully aware of and support the rights, needs and resources of refugee women and take appropriate specific actions;

5. Integrate considerations specific to the protection of refugee women into assistance activities from their inception, including when planning refugee camps and settlements, in order to be able to deter, detect and redress instances of physical and sexual abuse as well as other protection concerns at the earliest possible moment;

6. Extend professional and culturally appropriate gender-based counselling as well as other related services to refugee women who are victims of abuse;

7. Identify and prosecute persons who have committed crimes against refugee women and protect the victims of such crimes from reprisals;

8. Issue individual identification and/or registration documents to all refugee women;

9. Provide all refugee women and girls with effective and equitable access to basic services, including food, water and relief supplies, health and sanitation, education and skills training, and make wage-earning opportunities available to them;

10. Provide for informed and active consent and participation of refugee women in individual decisions about durable solutions for them;

11. Ensure that resettlement programmes make special provisions for refugee women at risk;

(b) Invites UNHCR to develop comprehensive guidelines on the protection of refugee women as a matter of urgency in order to give effect to its policy on refugee women (document A/AC.96/754).

Note on International Protection

17. Before giving the floor to the Director of International Protection to introduce the Note on International Protection (document A/AC.96/750), the Chairman reported to the Sub-Committee on the outcome of the first meeting held on 11 September 1990, of the EXCOM Working Group on Solutions and Protection. The Chairman reported that the main themes running through the interventions of Working Group participants had included the importance, scope and likely on-going nature of the Group's deliberations, the emphasis on realistic approaches to current problems, the desirability of drawing on outside expertise (government, intergovernmental and non-governmental), the need for the Group to link in with relevant consultations in other fora and the valuable role UNHCR can play as a catalyst in stimulating broad discussion. The Chairman also reported on his summing up of the debate, which had placed emphasis on the agreement reached on the desirability of as comprehensive an approach as possible, embracing problems not only of 1951 Convention refugees, but also of other categories or groups. The Group also accepted, he said, the need to absorb in its work the parallel work by other bodies such as the European Community, the Council of Europe, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and within the framework of the European Informal Consultation on asylum questions. The Working Group envisaged, the Chairman said, that its first substantive meeting should take place as soon as possible after the forty-first Session of the Executive Committee, with several subsequent meetings scheduled for early 1991. The Working Group itself would determine appropriate participation, including of experts, in its meetings, depending on the terms of reference to be agreed at the next meeting. Finally, the Chairman repeated the proposal he had made for a decision on the Working Group to be adopted by the Executive Committee (see paragraph 40).

18. In introducing the Note, the Director advised that both in its content and in the way it would be dealt with at this session of the Executive Committee, it differed fundamentally from Notes of previous years. The main purpose of the Note was to provoke more reflective discussion about basic

underlying assumptions for prospective global refugee and asylum policies, as well as certain practical approaches which they might embrace. Activities proposed in the Note in this regard were those which UNHCR would see merit in all interested parties, States and UNHCR alike, working together to pursue, with a view to a more effective response to refugee problems on the international level. The Director said that the Note had exceptionally been placed on the Sub-Committee agenda to allow for more detailed consideration of its contents, precluded in plenary because of the limited time available. The Director explained that the Note should in part be seen against the background of efforts currently underway in a number of States to reassess respective national asylum policies and the international handling of the refugee problem and to develop new comprehensive policies. UNHCR hoped to see emerging out of the debate a conclusion reflecting a certain consensus on basic assumptions and future courses of action set out in the Note, which the Director proceeded to review. He concluded by emphasizing the complementarity between issues in the Note and matters to be discussed by the Working Group on Solutions and Protection, while at the same time pointing out the different orientation of that Group. The Group's main task, he said, was to consider the broader framework of principles and law in which the practical approaches set out in the Note would be developed and pursued. He added that, at some point, the two exercises might profitably be brought together.

19. In the ensuing discussion, many delegations commended the comprehensive and innovative approach contained in the Note to the development of future strategies. This was regarded as timely and as particularly useful in that it provoked important discussion on future directions for the work of States, the Executive Committee and UNHCR. The Note's global approach to the refugee problem was generally appreciated, several delegations stressing the impossibility of viewing the phenomenon in isolation. Several delegations variously observed that the Note made a valuable contribution to understanding the stresses and strains burdening the system and that it constituted a helpful broadening of the traditional analysis.

20. A number of delegations emphasized the central role of protection in the work of the High Commissioner and the continuing primacy of the protection function. One delegation stressed its operational, humanitarian and non-political character and drew attention to UNHCR's doctrinal responsibility to work for the progressive development of international refugee law and refugee concepts. Other delegations reconfirmed their governments' commitment to responsibilities undertaken pursuant to the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol. In this connection, a call was made for greater adherence to these two instruments. One delegation expressed the hope that all States parties would respond promptly to UNHCR's questionnaire on implementation of these instruments, to facilitate UNHCR's task of protecting refugees.

21. Several delegations expressed concern about protection problems highlighted in the Note, including the continued expulsion and refoulement of refugees. One delegation stressed that non-refoulement, not asylum, is the core principle underpinning protection. While non-refoulement implies the provision of asylum while it is needed, the two concepts are not one and the same. Another delegation was particularly concerned about the number of women and children exposed to refoulement and expulsion and called for details as to the children affected by forcible recruitment into irregular or regular armed forces. That delegation felt that it would be useful to annex to the Note the report of the Working Group of the Human Rights Sub-Commission on measures

affecting children amounting to slavery-like practices. ["Contemporary Forms of Slavery", Report of the Secretary-General (document E/CN.4/Sub.2/1990/43)]. As to detention of refugees, one delegation agreed that detention had to be kept to a minimum but observed that being an asylum-seeker was not in itself sufficient to remove all possibility of detention.

22. Several delegations expressed concern about the impact on protection of the financial crisis facing UNHCR. One delegation noted with dissatisfaction the reduction in UNHCR programmes occasioned by limited funds and suggested that when the Sub-Committee looked at new strategies, it had to accept that they would require appropriate financial support. Several other delegations emphasized the sacrifices of developing countries hosting large refugee populations and called for resolution of UNHCR's financial crisis and satisfaction of refugee needs. One delegation understood UNHCR's concern that financial restrictions are severely limiting its capacity to provide comprehensive protection and pursue imaginative solutions, while noting the irony in the fact that annual costs for the asylum system in the OECD region are 10 times UNHCR's budget, even though these countries are host to less than 5 per cent of the world's refugees and displaced persons.

23. A few delegations mentioned the serious problems of persons displaced within their own countries and in need of, but without, international protection possibilities.

24. A number of delegations were particularly appreciative of the recognition in the Note of the serious problems posed for many States by the migratory element in movements of asylum-seekers. The need for responses to movements to differentiate between migrants and refugees was broadly accepted, a main reason being to prevent further, serious weakening of the institution of asylum and erosion of public confidence and support for it. A number of delegations pointed out in this connection that misuse of asylum procedures was no longer a minor irritant and several delegations stressed that this, and not more restrictive approaches in their countries to the refugee definition, were the reasons for declining recognition rates. It was emphasized by a number of delegations that immigration control was not only, as the Note had recognized, a proper exercise of sovereign authority, but was also the appropriate and necessary framework for responding to migrants using the asylum channel to gain entry. One delegation added in this regard that such control mechanisms should not be to the disadvantage of refugees.

25. It was noted by one delegation that in their root causes, both refugee and migratory movements often met in their very origins and several delegations acknowlegded the difficulties, on occasion, in clearly distinguishing one from another. The challenge, said one delegation, was for national and international institutions to identify the victims of persecution and provide access to fair and impartial procedures to determine their claims. Another delegation drew attention to the limitation of the 1951 Convention refugee definition, suggesting that this was one factor at the heart of the asylum crisis and that its strict application left millions of persons in the grey zone, outside the protection of international instruments. There was a need to reassess and update this definition so that it accords with current realities, as had been done at the regional level.

26. In a related observation, one delegation felt that the Note used the term "refugee" to apply to persons it did not cover. In addition, that delegation queried the fact that while there was welcoming recognition in the Note of the complexity of prevailing problems, the Note went on to take issue with methods of control adopted by many States. For that delegation, the two were not consistent. That same delegation felt that the Note might have contained more detail on the true nature of the asylum situation today, and analyzed the meaning and causes of flight, including the relevant significant economic factors, world demographic developments and natural disasters. Another delegation felt that the Note should have examined the consequences of recent political developments for the work of the High Commissioner. In referring to causes of departure, other delegation variously referred to degrees and level of prevailing strife, expanded communication networks and greater mobility. One delegation felt that Cold War strategies had exacerbated refugee movements in the past. Another delegation stated that colonial domination, racism, foreign occupation and aggression were major root causes of refugee movements and their role in this regard needed greater reflection.

27. As to future strategies and the assumptions which should underline them, the majority of delegations were in broad agreement with the conclusions contained in the Note. Several delegations stressed the fundamental changes which had taken place affecting the global refugee situation and which necessitated new thinking and a revision of existing approaches, even while, according to one delegation, the framework of international refugee law has proven its strength and flexibility over the last 40 years. These changes included the rise the in number of refugees, the growing migratory element, financial and practical constraints in receiving countries and the North/South dimension in the flow. Several delegations variously commented in this regard on the heavy burdens for developing countries and on the large acceptance rate of refugees, coupled with enormous funds spent on asylum-seekers in developed countries. In this connection, certain delegations queried whether there was, indeed, an asylum crisis as the Note suggested. One delegation suggested that there was a need at this point for further analysis of the concept of temporary asylum.

28. Many delegations commented on the emphasis in the Note on more effective use of human rights bodies and mechanisms. There was broad agreement that movements of refugees are often caused by human rights violations and could raise certain grave human rights issues. Several delegations felt that the human rights of refugees, far from being less in focus, were a very prevalent consideration today. One delegation said that persecution is a gross manifestation of human rights abuse and that any refugee approach needs to take account of important human rights. However, according to that delegation, a human rights model has too broad a scope to provide a workable framework of analysis. Another delegation observed in this connection that movements of asylum-seekers may have nothing to do with human rights. Other delegations agreed strongly with the emphasis in the Note on prevention and early warning as key aspects of new approaches, although one delegation raised the question as to the mandate and responsibility for undertaking such approaches. Another delegation commended the High Commissioner for his initiative in establishing within UNHCR an Early Warning Working Group.

29. Several delegations noted that their countries were parties to the 1984 United Nations Convention against Torture and abided by the non-refoulement

prohibition contained therein, that is, prohibition of return to situations of torture, even if persons concerned could not technically be brought within the refugee definition. Two delegations felt, however, that any responsibility not to return non-refugees was far less clear-cut in situations that do not involve torture.

30. One delegation said that it could not give its unequivocal support to the use of all human rights bodies to promote refugee causes, although it reaffirmed its support for a number. Another delegation agreed that more active use should be made of human rights machinery and suggested that the United Nations Commission on Human Rights might even envisage certain control mechanisms once agreement had been reached on a Declaration on the Right to Leave and Return to One's Country. In addition, that delegation recommended an increased co-operation between UNHCR and the Committee on Human Rights, to complement the information provided by States on their compliance with Article 19 of the Covenant on Civil and Political rights, as it relates to countries of origin and asylum.

31. Several delegations agreed with the link between development aid and improvement of human rights situations. One delegation commented that, while such aid should encompass a concern to reduce the flow of asylum-seekers, it must remain a wider enterprise. Another delegation commented that development aid was fundamental to the realization of durable solutions, particularly given the precarious situation in a number of developing countries, and that equitable burden sharing was required. A number of delegations endorsed the principle of international burden-sharing.

32. A number of delegations agreed that regional bodies might more actively contribute to resolution of regional problems. Several delegations mentioned the positive examples of regional efforts in Central America and Africa, which one delegation felt should have received attention in the Note. One delegation expressed reservations about regional approaches as a model to deal with all situations, particularly those movements which have extra-regional causes and implications.

33. A number of delegations agreed that measures to broaden the acceptability of traditional durable solutions were desirable, and that voluntary repatriation remained the pre-eminent one. One delegation stressed that refugee camps could only be an interim solution which should not last longer than was absolutely necessary. The majority of delegations supported stronger emphasis on, and greater elaboration of the responsibilities of, the countries of origin, both as regards prevention and in relation to return. Making public information activities an integral part of new strategies was broadly supported. As to the question of open debate on possible new strategies, certain delegations agreed that this was desirable. There were, however, reservations expressed about creation of "Comités de Sages" and some delegations rejected the idea. While there was some support for expert commentary on new approaches, caution was also expressed by certain delegations who stressed that there was a need, first, for national decision-makers to complete their thinking on the issues. Several delegations observed that there were adequate structures at national and regional levels and new bodies or arrangements for consideration of such issues might lead to confusion.

34. Several delegations commented on the reference in the Note to the possibilities of legal migration as an alternative departure channel for non-refugee groups. One delegation drew attention to the limits to legal migration for those who would seek to migrate without compelling reasons while noting that legal migration is sometimes an effective means for assisting those compelled to leave. Another delegation felt that creation of migration quotas in a number of countries was not possible. One delegation understood the reference in terms of the need to promote only the legal migration channel for non-refugees, without thereby restricting asylum opportunities where persecution was the basis for departure.

35. A number of delegations welcomed the call for measures to deal humanely and effectively with rejected asylum-seekers. One delegation commented that this was necessary in part to prevent exploitation of this group of persons, who could not remain outside the social and legal networks in a country. Return of such persons, accordingly to this delegation, was the only feasible solution. Another delegation noted that measures for this group should be in accordance with immigration regulations as well as applicable international standards and practices. Several delegations supported a possible role for UNHCR in the return of rejected asylum-seekers. One delegation felt, however, that this should not lead to a broadening of the High Commissioner's mandate.

36. Many delegations recommended that the issues raised in the Note or during discussions thereon should be referred to the Executive Committee's Working Group on Protection and Solutions for further consideration. The establishment of the Working Group was welcomed by many as a useful initiative and a potentially valuable forum for refinement of further thinking on future strategies as well as for development of their conceptual framework. UNHCR's key role here as a catalyst, facilitator and, above all, as the voice of refugees, was underlined by one delegation. Another delegation stressed, in this connection, the need for a strong research capacity within UNHCR and a strengthened research support for this Working Group.

37. Several delegations also drew attention to the discussions on such issues taking place within the framework of the Informal Consultations on asylum issues in Europe. These consultations were praised as most useful and several delegations commended the High Commissioner for the arrangements established within UNHCR to service the consultations. One delegation also drew attention to other European consultative fora, in particular the process which led to the signing of agreements between the Schengen countries and between member States of the European Community. That delegation thanked the High Commissioner and his staff for their constructive participation in consultations on the texts of those agreements.

38. In response to the debate, the Director of International Protection thanked delegations for the frankness of their comments. The protection of refugees could only benefit from direct and open dialogue between UNHCR and States. As to the comments of two delegations on the apparent dichotomy in the Note between recognition that non-refugee claimants were a major problem and criticism of restrictive approaches adopted by States to deal with it, the Director said that while UNHCR recognized and appreciated the major difficulties facing many receiving countries, the Office's concern was that certain measures chosen to respond to them and to combat abuse might, even inadvertently, jeopardize genuine refugees. The challenge was for States and UNHCR to develop responses to the problems faced by States and by refugees

which were effective and, at the same time, preserved the protection of refugees. On falling recognition rates, the Director said that it was clear that the majority of persons rejected were not refugees under the 1951 Convention. However, there were some individuals caught up in the process whose claims should not have been rejected and these were UNHCR's concern. In addition, amongst those rejected there were a number who, while not 1951 Convention refugees, nevertheless had special protection needs. In relation to both categories, the Director said, UNHCR's concern was that appropriate safeguards or safety nets be built into the system to ensure the necessary protection. This concern had been aired in various consultations and in fact was widely shared by many States. The Director welcomed support expressed for the fundamental role of the non-refoulement principle in refugee protection. As to human rights references, he said that it was evident that in all refugee situations there was a human rights element, even if this did not mean that all refugees are human rights victims or that all victims of human rights violations are refugees. Finally, the Director agreed with the observations made by delegations on the value of the informal consultations and on the necessity to preserve a research capacity in UNHCR. The Director hoped that the necessary resources would be made available to UNHCR in this latter regard.

39. At the conclusion of the discussion on this item, the Sub-Committee recommended that the Executive Committee adopt the following conclusion on the Note on International Protection.

> The Executive Committee,
>
> Welcoming the significant progress made over the past forty years in resolving refugee situations in a number of regions and in guaranteeing protection and assistance to millions of refugees on the basis of accepted legal principles and a spirit of international solidarity and burden-sharing;
>
> Taking into account, however, that despite these positive developments and international co-operation to resolve situations, the refugee and asylum problem in its entirety is bigger, more complex and as persistent as ever;
>
> Convinced that those humanitarian and human rights principles at the base of international concern for and protection of refugees are as relevant today as they were in 1951;
>
> Believing though, that the current size and characteristics of the refugee and asylum problem necessitate appropriate reassessment of international responses to the problem to date, with a view to developing comprehensive approaches to meet present realities;
>
> Stressing that, to succeed, comprehensive approaches must in addition endeavour to respond to the concerns of all affected States including first asylum and receiving States;
>
> Appreciating the comprehensive approach taken in the High Commissioner's Note on International Protection in presenting some considerations for developing refugee strategies:

a) Took note of the High Commissioner's emphasis in the Note on International Protection on the following:

- prevention and early warning of developing situations, and mediation as an effective method to contain problems;

- the possible human rights dimensions of refugee flows, which can also be a source of national and international instability;

- the difference between refugees and persons seeking to migrate for economic and related reasons and the need for any refugee policy to respect fundamental distinctions between the two categories of people and be fully consonant with the principles particular to and essential for the protection of refugees, including first asylum and non-refoulement;

- the fact that voluntary repatriation, local settlement or resettlement, that is, the traditional solutions for refugees, all remain viable and important responses to refugee situations, even while voluntary repatriation is the pre-eminent solution;

- development of measures which would underpin and broaden the acceptance of the three traditional durable solutions;

- the need for countries of origin to assume a significant responsibility in the search for appropriate solutions, including through addressing root causes and facilitating voluntary repatriation and the return of their nationals who are not refugees.

- more detailed articulation of the concept of State responsibility, particularly as it relates to the responsibilities of the countries of origin;

- more active and effective utilization by States and UNHCR of UN and other qualified expert bodies as appropriate, including human rights bodies, in their relevant areas of competence;

- consideration of development aid as a complementary measure to address causes of, prevention of and solutions to refugee and refugee-like situations;

- encouragement to regional bodies or groupings more actively to contribute to positive resolution of problems in their respective regions;

- development of measures by States to deal responsibly and effectively with rejected asylum-seekers;

- full integration of public information activities into strategies;

- encouragement of full and open debate on new approaches;

- consideration of the relationship between asylum problems and international migration;

b) Decided to refer these matters for reflection to the Executive Committee Working Group on Solutions and Protection.

40. In addition, the Sub-Committee recommended that the Executive Committee adopt the following decision:

The Executive Committee decided to:

- Take note of the establishment of the Working Group on Solutions and Protection;

- Request that a further meeting of the Working Group be convened as soon as possible after the forty-first Session of the Executive Committee;

- Note that in principle the participation in Working Group discussions should not be limited only to Executive Committee Member countries and that this would be decided upon by the Working Group in the light of the demands of its work;

- Note also that the work of the Working Group was urgent and that results were required, so that a tight work schedule would be desirable, although any decision on more precise scheduling of meetings should be left to the Group itself;

- Request that a report on the work of the Working Group be made to the 42nd Session of the Executive Committee in 1991.

Any Other Business

41. Under this agenda item, the Director of International Protection drew attention to document EC/SCP/61 which contains a progress report on the subject of Implementation of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees. The Director recalled that last year's session of the Executive Committee had requested the High Commissioner to prepare a detailed report on the implementation of these instruments on the basis of more detailed information to be provided by States parties. Subsequent thereto, UNHCR circulated a questionnaire on implementation which asked States to provide the required information in two phases. The Director informed the delegations that UNHCR had now received the first of the responses - eleven in all - and that more were arriving. He confirmed, as stated in document EC/SCP/61, UNHCR's intention to present a comprehensive progress report on this exercise to the forty-second session of the Executive Committee in 1991, by which time it was hoped that all replies would have been received.

42. The Director also referred to document EC/SCP/60 which contains information on UNHCR's activities in the areas of refugee law promotion, dissemination and training during the period July 1989 to July 1990. As seen from this Note, UNHCR has continued its refugee law and protection training activities at the level called for by the Executive Committee last year. The Director underscored, however, that at this point it looks extremely doubtful

that UNHCR will be able to continue at this level unless sufficient resources are forthcoming. He expressed the hope that the Sub-Committee would continue to lend its active support to the continuation of these most important activities of the Office.

43. Finally, the Director referred to the progress report on the preparations for the EXCOM Working Group on Solutions and Protection, contained in document EC/SCP/62. He noted that this Working Group had held its first meeting on 11 September this year and that the Chairman had already reported to the Sub-Committee on its outcome.

44. One delegation praised the very high quality of UNHCR's refugee law training activities. He stated that his country supported continued training activities by UNHCR in this field, whenever and wherever possible. He also urged the Office to seek new sources of revenue in order to fund these activities. Another delegetaion expressed the hope that UNHCR would be able to obtain sufficient financial support to be able to continue its refugee law training and promotion activities on a substantial level.

45. Two delegations underlined the importance of UNHCR's activities on behalf of refugee children, and especially unaccompanied minors, and recalled previous years discussions on this subject. These delegations requested that UNHCR submit a progress report on its programmes for refugee children and the activities of the UNHCR Working Group on refugee children to the forty-second session of the Executive Committee.

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
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Forty-first session

SUB-COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE
AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. Opening

1. His Excellency, Dr. Fredo Dannenbring, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Chairman of the Fortieth Session of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, opened the meeting, which was held on 28 September 1990

2. The Chairman recalled the unique and challenging nature of the past year, both for the Executive Committee (EXCOM) and the Office of the High Commissioner. He noted that the Office was rationalizing its activities and enhancing its effectiveness. At the same time, he noted that some budgetary and funding matters remained unfinished from the work of the Temporary EXCOM Working Group that had considered UNHCR programme, assistance, budgetary and administrative matters between November 1989 and May 1990. The Chairman affirmed the Executive Committee's renewed and full confidence in UNHCR and that UNHCR must continue to count on the international community's sustained financial support with adequate resources to accompany the improvements and reforms.

3. After dealing with various organizational matters, the Chairman invited the Deputy High Commissioner to introduce the agenda item covering major trends in UNHCR's assistance activities and General Programme targets; Voluntary Funds Accounts for 1989 and the Report of the Board of Auditors thereon; Review of the Status of Contributions to UNHCR Voluntary Funds and Funding Requirements of 1990 and 1991; and Human Resources Management and Administration.

B. Deputy High Commissioner's Introductory Address

4. The Deputy High Commissioner recalled the overview he had given on UNHCR's progress to date at the meeting of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters held on 20 September 1990 to consider follow-up action to the Temporary EXCOM Working Group's report. This time, he said, he wished to look forward to 1991, and share some thoughts on forecasting the years beyond. He emphasized UNHCR's efforts in harnessing scant resources and giving priority to protection, life-saving and life-sustaining activities. He said that these measures had not reduced the number of refugees in first asylum countries. On the contrary, UNHCR had missed chances to implement durable solutions like voluntary repatriation and local integration where opportunities for them existed. In the final analysis, appropriate durable solutions cost less than indefinite care and maintenance programmes.

5. The Deputy High Commissioner cited the approved General Programmes target of $378.9 million for 1990, including the $38 million deficit carry-over from 1989; and the initial 1991 target of $345.6 million, including the recent budget increase related to Liberian refugees. He noted that, despite new needs there was an obvious downward trend of some 10 per cent in both 1990 and 1991 targets as compared with actual 1989 expenditure of $386.6 million.

6. On funding, the Deputy High Commissioner said that UNHCR had to deal with two unpredictable factors: The number of refugees needing help in any given year and the funds made available to help them. He said that because of a shortage of funds in 1990, UNHCR repeatedly had to scale down programmes. He indicated that 20 per cent of the 1990 target still remained to be raised under General Programmes, and that there were further shortfalls under several Special Programmes. The Deputy High Commissioner emphasized that the lack of both funds and funding certainty meant that UNHCR had to concentrate on immediate needs, which were also suffering from budgetary constraints. Refugee children were particularly affected by difficult living conditions and deprived because UNHCR was unable to provide many of them with the basic human right of education. Recalling the observation in the Board of Auditors report, the Deputy High Commissioner emphasized the need for the Office to address, jointly with the Executive Committee, the unpredictability of UNHCR funding. UNHCR faced a continuous inability to plan, and a limited capacity to respond to emergencies. To improve UNHCR's response to crises, and to meet unexpected needs, a special contingency account built into UNHCR's financial structure would give the Office some of the flexibility it absolutely needed.

7. Turning to multi-year planning and budgeting, the Deputy High Commissioner explained that as appealing as the idea was, the difficulty of such an approach for an organization like UNHCR was the unpredictability of refugee situations and the hazards of political forecasting. Such planning was more appropriate to development organizations.

8. On staffing, the Deputy High Commissioner said that by 1 January 1991, there would be fewer than 2000 posts in UNHCR. In one year, almost 400 posts would have been discontinued. The need for a rapid response to refugee situations, however, would continue to mean that - as the ACABQ had also pointed out - the High Commissioner should have the flexibility to adjust staffing levels accordingly. He noted that the retrenchment currently being

undertaken by the Office would have both human and financial costs. Retrenchment would cost an estimated $2.9 million to $3.5 million, out of which $2.5 to $2.9 million related to General Programmes. UNHCR had sought the authority of the Sub-Committee to cover such costs from the Programme Reserve to the extent that they cannot be absorbed within existing support cost allocations.

9. The Deputy High Commissioner highlighted UNHCR's improvements in its capacity to meet the needs of refugee women. He said UNHCR was trying to ensure that these needs were integrated at all stages of UNHCR projects. UNHCR staff were being trained to understand this process, which would improve programming for, and protection of, refugee women. Implementation of this policy would be a UNHCR priority in 1991.

10. Turning to evaluation activities, the Deputy High Commissioner said that UNHCR has tried to ensure the independence of the evaluation function. The Central Evaluation Unit will now report directly to the Executive Office through an Evaluation Committee chaired by the Deputy High Commissioner.

11. The Deputy High Commissioner mentioned that in view of financial constraints, UNHCR had enhanced its in-house training capacity for several years. He noted that the UNHCR Emergency Management Training Programme was recognized as a model within the United Nations system. During the last two years, some 300 UNHCR staff had received training in management skills.

12. Concluding, the Deputy High Commissioner reiterated that UNHCR's overall capacity had been strengthened through its new structure, but many operational problems remained. Operating without predictable resources continued to haunt the organization. He assured the Sub-Committee of UNHCR's readiness, nevertheless, to continue to do its job.

C. Debate

13. The Chairman opened the discussion on the agenda items covered in the Deputy High Commissioner's presentation and called for interventions from delegations and responses from the Deputy High Commissioner and his staff.

General Remarks

14. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the efforts of the staff, particularly over the past six months, in responding to the information needs and concerns of the Temporary EXCOM Working Group, and in achieving progress in administrative and financial matters. They also commented on UNHCR's follow-up action on the recommendations of the Temporary EXCOM Working Group, while at the same time underlining the fact that much remained to be done in fully implementing those recommendations. One delegation noted that while at last year's meeting the prevailing mood was one of gloom, this year's meeting was characterized by cautious optimism. Other delegations made the point that although UNHCR had passed through a difficult period, and even though there were still financial problems to be confronted, especially in the fourth quarter, UNHCR was a stronger office because of this experience.

15. In his responses to these remarks, the Deputy High Commissioner thanked delegations for their candour, and for their constructive and positive remarks. He acknowledged that progress had been made, but a number of problems remained unresolved, particularly the mobilization of funds and the identification of new donors and private sector funding.

Documentation

16. While most delegations referred positively to the comprehensive and readable quality of the documentation placed before the Sub-Committee, some delegations would have preferred documentation distributed in a more timely fashion in the working languages of EXCOM.

Board of Auditors Report

17. One delegation noted, from the Reports of the Board of Auditors and of the ACABQ, that it appeared that year by year UNHCR was managing its programmes and resources better. In relation to the Board of Auditors Report, the same delegation: Agreed with the priority given by the Board of Auditors for UNHCR to obtain guaranteed income to complement voluntary contributions; placed emphasis on the recommendation concerning disclosure of data on global food assistance feeling that such information would be valuable to all countries, particularly in planning resource allocations to meet food needs; thought that the recommendations concerning administrative charges on "simple transfers" and reimbursement by donors for food purchases could lead to savings for UNHCR; and felt that whatever modalities might be reached in terms of assessed contributions they should lead to an increase in resources for UNHCR. Another delegation also drew attention to the Board of Auditors' comments on the need to achieve an acceptable balance between administrative and programme costs at the country level.

Funding and Budgeting Mechanisms

18. Several delegations expressed appreciation for UNHCR's provision of regular updates on its funding and cash flow situation. One delegation regretted that UNHCR's efforts to identify new sources of funding had not yielded the expected results. The bulk of UNHCR's resources seem to come from the same group of governments, as well as an inter-governmental organization, the EEC. More donors should be encouraged to contribute to UNHCR, and in more significant ways. A number of delegations stressed the need to widen the donor base by, inter alia, having recourse to the private sector. Other delegations highlighted the problems posed for UNHCR because of the unpredictability of funding. One delegation noted the current competition for scarce humanitarian funds, and felt that UNHCR was going to be able to assure its share of such funds only by showing itself to be an efficient organization and by cogent presentation of refugee needs. That presentation should highlight the short- and long-term costs to the international community if these needs went unmet.

19. One delegation, pointing out the difficulties encountered by continual increases in UNHCR's funding requirements, argued that such increases, being met only by some traditional donors, permitted other countries not to shoulder the additional burden. Another delegation, while highlighting the uncertainty

of UNHCR's cash flow, pointed to the anomaly of the Executive Committee approving a budget target at its annual meeting, while the Pledging Conference was held at a later date.

20. Several delegations stressed the merits of multi-year planning. One delegation pointed out that UNHCR could not discount multi-year planning solely on the basis of the unpredictability of refugee needs. If government representatives at the Sub-Committee are to pass judgement on annual UNHCR needs, those needs should be presented in a longer-term perspective.

21. In regard to private sector funding, the Deputy High Commissioner noted the modest contributions so far received by the Office towards promoting this activity. He stressed that private sector funding was a long-term undertaking, and that no immediate results could be expected. UNHCR's current focus was on meeting short-term funding deficiencies. He also referred to NGO concerns that UNHCR's efforts to raise funds in the private sector would constitute competition in their traditional resource base.

22. With respect to multi-year budgeting, the Deputy High Commissioner pointed out the difficulties involved when UNHCR was unable even to meet current year budgets. The unpredictability applied not only to UNHCR's funding situation but also to refugee flows which were often linked to political developments. The Deputy High Commissioner nevertheless agreed that UNHCR would continue to explore the enhanced use of multi-year planning.

Evaluation

23. Several delegations welcomed the Information Note on Evaluation of Assistance Activites (A/AC.96/757). One delegation felt that the information provided in the Note was useful, but would have preferred more information on the actual impact of the evaluations carried out. Many delegations expressed satisfaction with UNHCR follow-up to the recommendations of the Temporary EXCOM Working Group regarding evaluation. These delegations agreed that, in the present financial situation, evaluation was paramount in ensuring the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of UNHCR operations.

24. Many delegations approved of the reporting line of the Central Evaluation Unit to the Executive Office, where the Unit's independence and objectivity could be ensured. Several delegations expressed the opinion that evaluation should be separate from what was described as the everyday activities of the organization. One delegation pointed out that UNHCR's evaluation methods and follow-up mechanisms appeared to be well developed. To further refine the system, another delegation stressed the importance of clear links between evaluation and the project design and approval process.

25. Commenting on evaluation follow up, some delegations pointed out that training was an important means of disseminating the lessons learned during evaluation, as was consolidating findings that have general application. Another delegation stressed that although independence and rigour were important, how evaluations were incorporated into programmes was crucial; indeed many organizations seemed to fail in this regard. Several delegations indicated their interest in receiving complete evaluation reports rather than just summaries. Some delegations also hoped that the role of host countries and refugees in evaluation could be clarified at the next session of the Sub-Committee.

26. Some delegations also recommended that UNHCR provide the next meeting of the Sub-Committee with a complete evaluation plan that would place special emphasis on evaluations covering the cost-effectiveness of major programmes. Most delegations supported this emphasis on cost-effectiveness. Although voicing appreciation for this approach during the latter part of 1989, one delegation felt that such an orientation was biased and now somewhat obsolete.

27. The Deputy High Commissioner, responding to the comments regarding availing evaluation reports to members, pointed out that the reports often considered politically delicate issues, and sensitive staffing and management matters. Moreover, the usefulness of evaluation reports in UNHCR would be diminished if reports had to be sanitized for external distribution. Nevertheless, he assured the Sub-Committee of the readiness to continue discussing evaluation conclusions with members.

Durable Solutions

28. Several delegations pointed to the dramatic reduction in funds allocated for local integration, while there was at the same time a dramatic increase for care and maintenance, especially in Africa. One delegation asked about the significance of this trend, in particular its impact on the major investments made in previous years towards local integration. The same delegation also asked whether local integration was in fact always a realizable solution.

29. The Deputy High Commissioner noted that whereas new situations in Malawi and West Africa had increased the volume of care and maintenance programmes, the shift from local integration programmes in other countries in Africa had also affected the ratio in the programme budget. While acknowledging that durable solutions had been sacrificed in favour of life-sustaining activities, he said that the Office's mandate was to seek such solutions. Care and maintenance was a temporary measure whilst avenues for durable solutions were being explored.

General Programme Targets

30. Many delegations felt that the revised 1991 projected target of $345 million was realistic and acceptable. A number of delegations drew attention, however, to the current competition placed on humanitarian funds because of the Middle East situation, and economic considerations in donor countries which could continue to restrict funding availability. In regard to the revised 1990 target, one delegation felt that it was not unrealistic, but significant fund raising efforts on the part of both donors and UNHCR were still needed. A number of delegations made the point that the balancing of the 1990 accounts was among UNHCR's first priorites and that there could be no evasion of the responsibility to avoid a deficit.

Special Programmes

31. While many delegations noted that a considerable shortfall remained in funding for General Programmes, one delegation highlighted the bleaker picture for Special Programmes, many of which remained under-funded or with only minimal contributions. Another delegation suggested that further reflection

may be required as to whether the difference between General Programmes and Special Programmes continued to be justifiable, and requested UNHCR to report to the Executive Committee on the scope and difinition of the two programmes and determine whether the distinction is worth maintaining .

32. The Deputy High Commissioner regretted that such a large gap existed in Special Programme funding since many of them had repatriation/durable solutions objectives. The trend by donors to increasingly earmark their contributions affected UNHCR's flexibility in responding to priorities like rapidly evolving repatriation opportunities.

Human Resources Management

33. Several delegations stressed the need for the most effective use of staff resources. They expressed appreciation for the seriousness with which the Staffing Review had been undertaken, and satisfaction over the projected attainment of staffing levels in line with previous EXCOM recommendations on the matter. One delegation urged that staffing should be kept at minimal levels. At the same time, there was general recognition that the High Commissioner should retain some flexibility in order to cope with emergency situations. One delegation pointed out that, upon completion of the current retrenchment exercise, need should be the appropriate yardstick with regard to staffing levels rather than a specific date. One delegation cautioned that staff reductions should not be disproportionate in the field in relation to those at headquarters, while another expressed hope for a proper balance in the grade levels between Headquarters and Field.

34. Most delegations which addressed the issue of rotation stressed the need for a fair, equitable and balanced application of the principle and indicated that, as pointed out in the Board of Auditors' report, a review of the rotation policy needed to be undertaken. As regards retrenchment, note was taken that expected savings in support costs in 1990 and 1991 would be somewhat offset by the cost of meeting contractual obligations as a result of separating staff. One delegation wished to know why the retrenchment costs were not included in the original estimates for 1990.

35. Delegations which addressed the issue of the Fund for Field Staff Housing and Basic Amenities, recognized its need, especially as far as remote field duty stations were concerned. At the same time, they felt that staff should be treated fairly and equitably under the Fund.

36. One delegation observed that a larger-than-usual number of promotions had taken place in 1990 and enquired about the cost implications.

37. On training, it was felt that despite the financial difficulties, the focus on the same improved standard and level of training activities should be sustained. One delegation commended UNHCR for the economies that had already been achieved in relation to training activities through various administrative improvements.

38. In relation to the retrenchment exercise, the Deputy High Commissioner said that every possible effort would be made to absorb the expenses within existing support cost allocations, both in 1990 and 1991. UNHCR was nevertheless seeking authorization to cover costs from the Programme Reserve

to the extent that they could not be absorbed within existing support cost allocations. He added that, as the Staffing Review had ended only in June 1990, providing an estimate for retrenchment costs in the original 1990 estimates had thus not proved possible. Furthermore, the cost of separation differed between individuals. The exact financial impact of retrenchment would be known only when actual separations took place.

39. With regard to rotation, the Deputy High Commissioner agreed on the need for a review of the policy, including, inter alia, the length of standard assignments, which should, as much as possible, be uniform at field duty stations and especially in capital cities. At the same time, he noted that there were UNHCR staff serving at many remote locations where shorter standard assignment lengths were justified.

40. On the Fund for Field Staff Housing and Basic Amenities, he agreed that while some modifications in its use may be appropriate, there was still a need for the Fund itself, especially its amenities component, which considerably helped staff assigned to the most remote locations.

41. On the issue of promotions, he noted that prior to the promotion exercise, more than 50 per cent of staff in the Professional and higher categories were serving in posts whose grade was higher than their own grade level. Promotions had thus helped to redress an imbalance which existed within the organization. He added that more than half of the staff concerned were already receiving a special post allowance in relation to the post they occupied and consequently there were no costs associated with promotion in their case. As to the rest, he indicated an estimated cost of some $80,000 per annum, for which budget provision had already been made. He remarked that the current promotion exercise to some degree redressed past deficiencies.

42. The Deputy High Commissioner, in regard to comments about the balance between headquarters and field staff reductions during 1990, noted that 17.3 per cent will have occurred at Headquarters as compared to 14.7 per cent in the field.

Special Contingency Account

43. Many delegations took note of the proposal to establish a Special Contingency Account (SCA) to remedy the problem of unpredictability of funding for UNHCR. While some delegations welcomed a mechanism such as the SCA, many others felt that further consideration was needed before the Executive Committee could reach a decision on the matter. Some recommended seeking the advice of the ACABQ, as well as that of the consultant who would examine UNHCR's funding mechanisms. One delegation pointed out that new funding mechanisms did not necessarily solve funding difficulties. Another delegation questioned why the Emergency Fund and the Programme Reserve could not be resorted to in addressing the problem. Several delegations called for clarification on how the SCA would be funded and replenished.

44. Many delegations agreed on the need, pending the receipt of pledged contributions, for UNHCR to have flexibility to ensure funding of ongoing needs under General Programmes and of initial emergency needs under Special Programmes.

45. The Deputy High Commissioner welcomed the suggestion that the mechanism for the envisaged SCA be referred to the ACABQ. He hoped that EXCOM would delegate to the Sub-Committee the authority to ratify the SCA after receiving the ACABQ's opinion. He elaborated that what was needed was the authority to temporarily borrow funds from the SCA to meet pressing needs pending the receipt of contributions.

Refugee Women

46. Many delegations were of the view that the paper on UNHCR's policy on refugee women was a sound basis for further action, and that integration of refugee women's needs in the programming and implementation process was a sensible and effective approach. They stressed the need for further action, particularly in the implementation of operational objectives. Some delegations requested a progress report at the next meeting of the Executive Committee, while others called for an annual progress report.

47. Several delegations stressed the importance of gender-awareness training in order to underline the need to include issues affecting refugee women as an integral part of UNHCR's protection and assistance activities. They encouraged the Office to expand such training and called on implementing partners to undertake similar training in support of UNHCR's activities. One delegation expressed readiness to provide financial support to UNHCR's training needs. Several delegations underlined the importance of addressing the issue of refugee women throughout operational systems such as planning, monitoring, reporting and evaluation. One delegation announced its intention to fund the post of Senior Co-ordinator for Refugee Women for a third year, and recommended that this function be integrated after that time in the regular UNHCR post structure. Another delegation welcomed this move.

48. Some delegations noted the importance of sufficient female staff, particularly in the field, in order that the actual situation of refugee women could be realistically assessed, and to enable full participation by refugee women in UNHCR programmes. Other delegations, while noting the complexity of obtaining accurate refugee statistics, emphasized the importance of obtaining male and female breakdowns in data collection in order to target programmes more efficiently. Some delegations noted the need for institutional commitment to programming for refugee women, and suggested that when this was achieved, the need for a specific focus on refugee women would disappear. One delegation raised the importance of non-governmental organizations as implementing partners in carrying out activities for refugee women.

49. Responding, the Deputy High Commissioner referred to current UNHCR efforts to mobilize NGOs towards a similar emphasis on Refugee Women. As 70 to 80 per cent of refugees were women and children, importance naturally had to be placed on their needs. Female staff in UNHCR and NGOs, as well as female refugee leaders, had to be actively involved and fully represented in planning and implementation of programmes.

50. The Deputy High Commissioner welcomed the continued support for the post of Senior Co-ordinator for Refugee Women, particularly given the importance of the forthcoming implementation phase of plans in this sector.

United Nations Regular Budget

51. While noting UNHCR efforts aimed at bringing about increased funding from the United Nations Regular Budget, one delegation pointed out that this did not seem to be reflected in the United Nations Regular Budget Outline for the 1992 - 1993 Biennium. Therefore, this delegation suggested that EXCOM members bring the matter to the attention of their delegations in the Fifth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly.

Programme Funds in Developed Countries

52. Two delegations pointed out the level of UNHCR's resources programmed in Europe and North America. One delegation observed that a recommendation of the Temporary EXCOM Working Group, which called for funding of such programmes by developed countries, had not resulted in greater or increased burden-sharing. Several delegations noted that funds thus saved from operations in Europe and North America could be put to better use in other refugee-hosting countries.

Financial and Management Information System (FMIS)

53. One delegation asked for more information on the cost benefits of FMIS. On the question as to how the progressive implementation of the FMIS was improving productivity, the Deputy High Commissioner said that substantial benefits had already been achieved in the Field, but that progress at Headquarters had been disappointing due to the financial crisis and organizational changes which had delayed implementation.

Inter-Agency Co-operation

54. One delegation expressed satisfaction over the recent UNDP and ECOSOC Resolutions on refugees, returnees and displaced persons, and appreciation for the direction the negotiations with WFP were taking. The delegation expressed hope that other agencies, within their field of competence, would contribute to meeting refugee needs. One delegation, however, felt that the response of other United Nations agencies had been disappointing. There was an obvious need, said the delegation, for governments to take concerted action in the governing bodies of these other agencies to ensure that a more comprehensive approach to the needs of refugees be formulated. The same delegation welcomed moves towards a comprehensive approach, as reflected in the above-mentioned UNDP and ECOSOC Resolutions. One delegation said it was interested to know what savings had resulted from inter-agency co-operation. Several delegations commented on the enhanced co-operation with WFP, particularly with respect to covering transportation costs. One delegation emphasized that support should be given in the WFP Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes so that WFP could assume full responsibility for the delivery of basic food assistance to refugees. In this regard the same delegation expressed his government's willingness to fund 100 per cent of external transport and of internal transport, shipping and handling costs. Two delegations asked whether a global picture of food aid assistance for refugees could be made available.

55. In his response, the Deputy High Commissioner emphasized the need for a co-ordinated approach to inter-agency co-operation. He referred to his meetings with senior officials of UNDP, WFP and UNICEF. The thrust of these meetings had been to undertake joint programming endeavours placing the needs of refugees alongside those of other vulnerable groups in the countries of first asylum. Noting that two delegations remarked on the need for assistance to refugee children, he referred to the High Commissioner and his discussions with the Executive Director of UNICEF to improve the complementarity of both agencies' programmes targeted for children.

56. The Deputy High Commissioner referred to an information paper which was now available to delegates describing WFP's refugee relief operations and joint WFP/UNHCR collaboration. This paper largely responded to the request for a more complete picture of global food aid to refugees. The Deputy High Commissioner also referred to his discussions with NGOs on the need for having one database reflecting global food aid needs and resource allocations to meet those needs.

Public Information

57. While appreciating the necessity to improve the cost-effectiveness of the Public Information Section, two delegations drew attention to the importance of this activity in sustaining public interest in the plight of refugees and in the fund-raising context. One delegation pointed out that these efforts should safeguard the issuance of Refugees Magazine which, in its view, is one of the best publications of the United Nations.

(As agreed at the 20 September 1990 Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters, the report of that meeting is hereby annexed.)

Report of the 20 September 1990 Meeting of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters to Review the Progress in the Implementation of the Report of the Executive Committee Temporary Working Group

A. Opening

1. His Excellency, Dr. Fredo Dannenbring, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany, Chairman of the fortieth session of the Executive Committeee, opened the meeting.

2. The Chairman pointed out in his opening statement that the primary purpose of the meeting was to deal with some unresolved funding and budgetary matters remaining from the deliberations of the Executive Committee's Temporary Working Group. In that connection, the meeting would start by reviewing the progress report on UNHCR action on Working Group recommendations. Other organizational matters to be addressed included the mechanism for further follow-up through future meetings of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters. The Chairman referred to the conference room papers before the meeting which included the report on actions taken on programmes, budgetary, administrative and organizational matters, other reports on co-operation with other organizations and on funding matters, and a description of the planned evaluation of UNHCR's Public Information Services. The Chairman invited the Deputy High Commissioner (DHC) to address the Sub-Committee.

B. Deputy High Commissioner's Speech

3. The DHC said that UNHCR had implemented many of the decisions of the Temporary Working Group. In just over three months since the decisions were adopted, improvements were already noticeable. He then outlined the areas in which UNHCR had achieved better management of resources and gave an overview of action to-date and strategies for the future.

4. On the impact of UNHCR's priority setting, the DHC noted that, with due regard to life saving and life sustaining activities, extensive programme cuts had been made. UNHCR also had to give added consideration to the longer term, to durable solutions and to integrating development assistance where necessary. Taking a long term view was increasingly difficult in the present financial climate.

5. The DHC indicated that UNHCR had begun to incorporate evaluation and audit findings into programme planning, delivery and review cycles. The new structure at Headquarters, bringing programme coordination and budget into one section under the Controller, fostered tighter management.

6. Turning to funding, the DHC remarked that financial uncertainty weakened UNHCR's response capability and had a negative influence on programme planning, particularly for durable solutions such as voluntary repatriation and local integration.

7. The DHC stated that UNHCR had made proposals on Regular Budget funding to the UN Controller. Those proposals could bring UNHCR an additional $4.5 to $6.7 million per annum. UNHCR was also exploring new ways of broadening its donor base. He mentioned that one member government had undertaken to finance an evaluation of UNHCR's funding mechanism, to be carried out later this year. At the same time, an evaluation of UNHCR's Public Information Service would also be undertaken.

8. On inter-agency cooperation, the DHC indicated that the situation had progressively improved. He mentioned that UNHCR had been designated as the lead agency for the repatriation of about 300,000 Cambodian refugees and displaced persons. The Office was involved, in close partnership with other agencies and NGO's, in extensive planning and preparatory work for this event. The repatriation of South African refugees would also provide an obvious role for UNHCR. With respect to the Western Sahara, the Secretary-General had outlined to the Security Council UNHCR's role in an eventual repatriation.

9. The DHC recalled that the rationale for better coordination was not just financial; another objective was to attain more technically enhanced and cost-effective responses to refugee situations. For solutions to be durable they needed to go hand in hand with development initiatives. He mentioned that UNHCR and UNDP were establishing an annual joint work programme, which the respective representatives would be asked to pursue, for cooperation in the field.

10. In conclusion, the DHC stated that UNHCR had a long history of getting the job done, but needed more resources to do it.

C. Reaction to the Report on Actions Taken

11. Many delegations congratulated UNHCR for the action taken on the recommendations of the Temporary Working Group, and the results achieved so far. They also expressed appreciation for the efforts UNHCR had put into the documentation of the meeting, stating that the number of papers was impressive and the quality generally high. Many indicated that they would need more time for thorough study of the documentation and therefore reserved their detailed comments for the forthcoming meeting of the Sub-Committee on Administrative and Financial Matters.

12. (The paragraphs which follow reflect a summary of the Sub-Committee's deliberations on the Report on Action taken by UNHCR on the Recommendations of the Temporary Working Group on Programme, Budgetary, Administrative and Organizational Matters).

13. Countries of origin/countries of asylum - One delegation expressed satisfaction at the setting up of an internal Working Group on Early Warning Systems, and at UNHCR's preparation of a background paper for the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. These initiatives were particularly important in the context of UNHCR's increased cooperation with other agencies in the UN system, notably UNDP. The same delegation asked what practical progress at the field level had been attained.

14. Impact of programme revisions - One delegation, referring to the DHC's remarks on priority-setting, commented that the international community must regard the impact of extensive programme cuts as troubling and serious. The problem should be addressed not only through the essential improvement of cost-effectiveness but also by the Executive Committee to the best of its ability. Several delegations associated themselves with this view.

15. Several delegations expressed satisfaction with the negotiations between WFP and UNHCR and hoped that UNHCR would provide more information on concrete results.

16. Special Programmes and Support Costs - One delegation, referring to UNHCR's efforts to redress the imbalance in administrative overheads charged to General Programmes versus Special Programmes, sought more information on UNHCR's use of variable overhead charges. In particular, the delegation hoped that whatever improvements were intended would lead to significant savings for General Programmes.

17. Multi-year budgeting - Several delegations referred to the current UNHCR thinking on multi-year programming and asked in which context such programming could be used. One delegation suggested the use of multi-year budgeting across UNHCR's programme activities as opposed to being limited just to project budgets. Some delegations agreed with this view, urging that UNHCR further consider its possibilities. One delegation, however, cited the conceptual issues involved, particularly the risk of creating some sort of international welfare state. One delegation said that such planning could attract multi-year funding pledges.

18. Contingency Fund - Several delegations, while noting positively the intentions of UNHCR, requested clarification on the proposal to establish a Special Contingency Account (SCA), wondering how such a fund differed from the Emergency Fund and Programme Reserve. All the delegations addressing this matter noted with satisfaction that UNHCR was proposing to report annually to the Executive Committee on the use of the proposed SCA. Two delegations supported the idea of and rationale behind the Fund, noting the flexibility it would give UNHCR beyond the Emergency Fund and the Programme Reserve. There was general agreement that further discussions were necessary concerning the SCA, particularly on the modalities for its broad-based funding.

19. Regular Budget - One delegation expressed the view that UNHCR's request for an increased share of the UN Regular Budget should receive the necessary international support. Several other delegations associated themselves with this statement. Another delegation acknowledged the usefulness of the information provided by UNHCR on this subject, and hoped that UNHCR would continue to inform the Executive Committee on action which delegations were expected to take.

20. Staffing - In referring to staffing statistics as reflected in the Overview of UNHCR Activities and in document A/AC.96/XLI/CRP.4, one delegation asked whether the statistics included contingency posts. Another requested to know what would be the savings resulting from post reductions.

21. Several delegations commented on the ratio between secretarial support and substantive officers, stating that they felt it was still quite high and that UNHCR would have to make further refinements in order to improve the ratio. One delegation requested that UNHCR examine the use of proven local talent under the Junior Professional Officer scheme.

22. Technical Support Section - Two delegations expressed concern that UNHCR should retain sufficient in-house technical expertise, and the right proportion between those based at headquarters and those serving in the field.

D. Cooperation with other Organizations

23. Several delegations noted that the Temporary Working Group had attached great importance to cooperation with other organizations. Many delegations commended UNHCR on its efforts in this respect, reiterating the importance of burden-sharing between various UN agencies. They hoped that concrete action would soon follow the range of formal meetings which had taken place with UNDP, WFP and UNICEF. They appealed to other delegations to lend support, in the governing councils of other UN agencies, to UNHCR's efforts in this endeavour. They recalled that the High Commissioner would be successful in his initiative only if all first asylum and donor countries were prepared to support him.

24. Commenting that UNHCR's life-saving activities could benefit from NGO participation, one delegation requested more information on how UNHCR chooses the most appropriate NGO partners for a given situation. The same delegation expressed appreciation for the use of the words "life saving" and "life sustaining" which seemed more descriptive of refugee situations than the terms, "care and maintenance". Another delegation cautioned against UNHCR handing over assistance activities to other UN agencies before these agencies had developed a capacity to deal with such activities. Sharing responsibility did not necessarily mean replacing UNHCR or reducing UNHCR's involvement. Similarly, the same delegation stated that efforts at further inter-agency cooperation should ensure that additional burdens were not placed on asylum countries.

E. Fund Raising

25. Two delegations announced additional contributions to UNHCR. One delegation called for greater fund raising efforts among non-traditional donors.

F. Public Information

26. One delegation asked how the aims and achievements of the Public Information Service were keyed to the overall objectives of UNHCR.

G. UNHCR's Responses to Interventions

27. The DHC thanked the delegates for their interventions and apologized for the late production and distribution of some of the documentation.

28. On the issue of secretarial support, the DHC stated that the phasing out of some secretarial posts had indeed been part of the post reduction exercise. He emphasized the generation gap which meant that many UNHCR staff were now computer-literate, as compared to their predecessors, and consequently the need for secretarial support would further decline.

29. On inter-organization cooperation, the DHC mentioned that UNHCR's recent efforts were just a start and would have to be pursued. He expressed satisfaction that UNDP had named a focal point in New York for the co-ordination of refugee-related issues with UNHCR. He expressed his appreciation for efforts that Government delegations had made in the governing bodies of other UN agencies. In response to a question from the floor, the DHC indicated that the new approach to co-ordination had already permitted UNHCR to save US$200,000 for an inoculation programme taken over by UNICEF.

30. While recognizing the advantages of multi-year programming and budgeting, the DHC pointed out that such action implied not only looking into a crystal ball, but also indulging in political forecasting; the Office should not be put into a position where it was perceived to be passing political judgements.

31. The Controller, in response to various interventions, clarified that the Special Contingency Account was intended to function as a funding reserve. UNHCR would resort to it to bridge temporary funding gaps and to meet ongoing needs under approved General Programmes and initial emergency needs under Special Programmes. The SCA would normally be reimbursed as soon as contributions for the activities in question are received. The SCA would be an income account, not an operations fund like the Emergency Fund.

32. On the proportion of in-house vs. external technical expertise, he mentioned the difficulty of quantifying or advancing a definitive percentage at this point. Appropriate proportions would evolve much more clearly as the headquarters and field structures settled after retrenchment. Staffing in the Programme and Technical Support Section had been cut substantially, but he believed that the Section was still meaningful in terms of the range of skills maintained.
He listed the skills available, confirming that expertise had been retained in each discipline, with health, water and social services having more than one expert each. He also mentioned that UNHCR had expertise in the field which could be used regionally on an *ad hoc* basis. Plans are also in hand to expand the practice of obtaining expertise through NGOs, other UN organizations and govenmental institutions.

33. The Controller, noting that the study on the ratio between substantive officers and secretaries had been completed, said that clerk typists had been included among secretarial staff. If a more narrow definition had been used, the ratio of substantive officers to secretaries would have been better.

34. On NGO participation, he confirmed that at the international level UNHCR was collaborating with NGOs that are renowned for expertise in special fields. He said that UNHCR maintained close contact at the field level with voluntary and government agencies willing and suited to undertake refugee work, and that UNHCR continually assessed and re-assessed such agencies' capacity.

35. He also explained how UNHCR had responded to requests to reduce the balance of overheads being charged to General vs. Special Programmes. UNHCR had identified at headquarters overhead costs which relate to the administration and management of ongoing Special Programmes which were previously charged to GP and are now being correctly charged to SP.

36. UNHCR would continue to identify for each SP the directly related overhead costs. As support costs vary between programmes, UNHCR does not intend using a fixed percentage of overheads. Direct administrative costs will be allocated to the programme in question and indirect overheads related to Special Programmes would then be distributed proportionally. He pointed out that this procedure would need to be defined in the months ahead.

37. The Controller noted that negotiations with WFP were not yet concluded but had sufficiently progressed so that there was a procedure for the reimbursement of Internal Transport, Storage and Handling (ITSH) costs. UNHCR was confident that it could realize the US$11 Million expected in ITSH from WFP for 1990, and that the projections for 1991 would also be achieved. Current discussions aim at WFP taking increasingly a lead role in mobilizing resources for basic food and related transport costs. WFP would also progressively become operationally responsible for inland transportation.

38. He said that UNHCR expected savings of some US$3 million from post reductions in 1990, and a more substantial amount in 1991. He noted, however, that the retrenchment of staff also costs money and that UNHCR was in the process of assessing this cost. It might be in the range of US$2 to $4 million. He emphasized that the posts shown in the statistics given to EXCOM included all contingency as well as established posts.

39. He said that since January 1990 ten offices (the actual number is 11) in the field had been closed. He was confident that another eight would be closed between then and the end of the year, and the future of an additional nine offices was under discussion.

40. The Controller also noted that multi-year budgeting would need further examination but could already be considered when durable solutions (local integration) have been agreed and implementation is imminent.

H. Organization of Future Meetings

41. A consensus was reached on how delegations perceived the future mechanism for following up the efforts of the Temporary Working Group. The Sub-Committee would play an active and fruitful role in this respect. There should be no advance calendar or fixed number of meetings, but as a rule of thumb the Sub-Committee would meet prior to informal and formal EXCOM meetings and at the request of its Chairman.

42. One delegation, supported by others, requested UNHCR to provide a list of outstanding unfinished business and key issues so that Sub-Committee meetings could be structured along those lines.